

REMARKS

Claims 16-30 are pending in the present application. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

Applicants thank the Examiner for writing in the October 22, 2003, Office Action that Claims 16-26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 14, and 15 are canceled without prejudice.

Claims 16-26 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of base Claim 1, correct typographical errors, and conform certain claims to more standard U.S. format. For example, the transitional phrase "is" has been replaced with the more conventional transitional phrase "comprising". In addition, process limitations were removed from product claims or such claims were converted to true process claims. Applicants contend that these changes do not involve any introduction of new matter. Consequently, entry of these changes is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

New claims 27-30 are added. Support for such claims can be found in original Claims 2 and 3, and at pages 8-10 of the specification. The Examiner will note that new Claims 27-30 depend directly or indirectly from amended Claim 16.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 16-26 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. The October 22, 2003, Office Action states that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Prior to this amendment, Claim 16 depended from Claim 1. As all of the limitations of Claim 1 are now found in Claim 16, the objection to Claim 16 has been obviated.

As the objection to Claim 16 has been obviated and Claims 17-26 depended directly or indirectly from Claim 16, Applicants contend that the objections to Claims 17-26 have been obviated.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102 (b)

Claims 1, 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the compositions disclosed in USP 5,500,138 to Bacon et al.. Applicants canceled Claims 1, 14, and 15. As a result, the aforementioned rejection has been obviated.

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Reply to Office Action of October 22, 2003
Customer No. 27752

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to Claims 16-26 and allow Claims 16-30. In the event there are remaining issues, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' undersigned attorney to discuss such issues.

Respectfully submitted,
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